

Testimony Concerning 445

Jennifer Ahern (3/18/14)

Volunteer with North East All Retriever Rescue

I would like to thank the Environment Committee for the opportunity to express my support of 445 ***AN ACT CONCERNING CERTAIN RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TASK FORCE ON THE SALE OF CATS AND DOGS FROM INHUMANE ORIGINS AT CONNECTICUT PET SHOPS.***

I am a registered voter in Essex, CT and I am a volunteer with North East All Retriever Rescue. I fully support the Task Force's recommendations including a requirement that all new pet shops may not sell commercially-bred dogs. I understand this is currently not included in the bill and ask that you please include it. The commercial breeding industry - even at its best - does not maintain humane breeding standards. I would like to see an end to the sale of puppy mill dogs in all pet shops.

Dogs are feeling beings and should not be exposed to the conditions at puppy mills. Further, the overpopulation of dogs is creating more supply than demand which results in these very same dogs ending up - once again - in confined conditions at shelters where millions of dogs are euthanized annually in this country. My Facebook pages and e-mails are filled with the saddest stories of purebred dogs on the kill lists hoping that a rescue group can come and take them. I also see countless videos of dogs being released from puppy mills that are sick or deformed due to the conditions they were forced to bear. It's just plain cruel.

My husband and I actually own 2 pet shop dogs (their chips gave us this info) that most likely came from puppy mills. This is not because I purchased them but because whoever did was not capable of taking on the responsibility and both dogs

ended up in shelters. One of the dogs was so distraught at being confined in the shelter that the Animal Control Officer told me that he would most likely not make it another night.

The dumping of these 2 dogs in shelters could have been prevented if there was any kind of new owner screening process before purchase at the pet store. This process is not a priority for retail establishments who are just interested in moving inventory. As an active volunteer with a retriever rescue group, I see examples of this all too often when people are "sold" a cute puppy without being told about the responsibility that goes along with it. We need caring people matching dogs with good homes not salespeople looking for profit only.

Please support the task force's recommendation in its entirety, including a requirement that all new pet shops may not sell commercially-bred dogs and phase-out the sale of commercially bred dogs in Connecticut's 16 current pet shops.

Thank you for giving me an opportunity to testify and I do hope you will strongly support this important piece of legislation.

Thank you,
Jennifer J. Ahern, Essex, CT